

The Forest Resource Development Program

Financial Assistance Program for Mississippi Forest Landowners

What is FRDP?

The Forest Resource Development Program (FRDP) provides financial assistance to eligible landowners for establishing and improving a crop of trees. This program helps offset a landowner's expenses by sharing the cost of implementing specific forestry practices designed to produce timber and enhance wildlife development.

Cost-share payments cover approximately 50 to 75 percent (depending on the practice) of the total cost of implementing one or more forestry practices, at the flat rate established for each individual practice. Eligible landowners can receive up to \$7,000.00 of FRDP assistance each year. In turn, a landowner agrees to protect the area receiving FRDP assistance from fire and grazing and to properly manage the area for a minimum of ten years.

Created in 1974 when state legislature passed the Mississippi Forest Resource Development Act, FRDP has since played a significant role in providing landowners the financial support needed to turn idle and unproductive lands into well-stocked, responsibly managed forestland teeming with game and non-game species of wildlife. FRDP is funded by the Timber Severance Tax - a state tax collected when timber is harvested. The Mississippi Forestry Commission administers the program and provides technical assistance to FRDP participants.

How Does FRDP Work?

A landowner applies for FRDP assistance at a Mississippi Forestry Commission's local office. The landowner has a forest management prescription prepared for each area where FRDP assistance will be applied. The prescription lists the forestry practices needed to establish or improve a crop of trees. It can be prepared by the service forester, private forestry consultant, or other registered forester.

The landowner submits the prescription to the service forester for approval. Once approved, the landowner is responsible for making the necessary arrangements to implement each practice (e.g., contract with vendor, order seedlings, etc.). As each practice is applied, the landowner makes periodic inspections to ensure that the work meets quality standards required by FRDP. The service forester will explain what to look for when making an inspection. As each practice is completed, the landowner notifies the service forester, who then makes a final inspection of the work to ensure that the practice has been applied in compliance with FRDP standards. The cost-share payment is made to the landowner after all recommended practices have been completed according to specifications and the landowner has paid all costs related to each practice.

Forestry Practices Eligible for FRDP Assistance

Cost-share rates and practices are subject to change. Contact local your local service forester to confirm current rates and practices.

TO ESTABLISH A CROP OF TREES

Tree Planting

Objective: To establish a crop of trees by hand and/or machine planting pine or hardwood seedlings. This practice includes the cost of seedlings, planting, and if needed, site preparation.

Each site to be planted is placed into one of the following categories:

**Open Land* (for tree planting only; no site prep is needed)

**Light Site Prep* (when tree planting is combined with light site preparation - e.g., chemical, bushhogging, disking, subsoiling, burning, etc.)

**Heavy Site Prep* (when tree planting is combined with heavy site preparation - e.g., chemical, chopping, shearing/raking, burning, etc.)

Mixed-Stand Regeneration

Objective: To establish a mixed-crop of pine and hardwood trees by planting and/or direct seeding. This practice includes the cost of seedlings, seed/acorns, planting, seeding, and if needed, light or heavy site preparation.

Direct Seeding

Objective: To establish a crop of pine or oak trees by directly applying seed/acorns to the site. This practice includes the cost of seed/acorns, seeding and if needed, light or heavy site preparation.

Post-Planting Site Preparation

Objective: To reduce or control undesirable competition within the first growing season of an established crop of trees. This practice includes the cost of site preparation.

TO IMPROVE AN EXISTING CROP OF TREES

Firebreaks

Objective: To construct a permanent firebreak, including the establishment of a vegetative cover. This practice includes the cost of firebreak construction, vegetative seed, fertilizer, and application of seed and fertilizer.

Release of Desirable Trees

Objective: To release an existing crop of desirable trees from undesirable, woody vegetation. This practice includes the application and cost of chemical.

Site Preparation for Natural Regeneration

Objective: To prepare the seed bed in order for natural regeneration to become established. This practice includes the appropriate method(s) of site

preparation - chemical, mechanical, and/or prescribed burning (including fire lanes).

Special Case Practice

Objective: To apply a series of forest management practices over a defined period of time in order to reach the desired management objective(s). A special case practice must be confined to a specific area where traditional forestry practices will not meet desired forest management objectives (e.g., kudzu control).

Who is Eligible for Assistance?

FRDP assistance is available to landowners in all Mississippi counties who own at least 10 acres of manageable land. Landowners eligible for assistance include:

- * Private nonindustrial landowners, groups, or associations
- * Landowning state agencies
- * Political subdivision of Mississippi

Applications for FRDP assistance are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Landowners failing to receive immediate cost-share assistance will be notified as soon as funds become available.

Landowner Responsibilities

Landowners receiving FRDP assistance are responsible for meeting these requirements:

- Provide a forest management prescription for each area where cost-share assistance will be applied.
- Implement all practices approved in the forest management prescription.
- Carry out each practice as soon as possible following approval. (All forestry practices must be completed during the fiscal year for which they are approved - a period from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next.)
- Pay the total cost of implementing each approved practice. (FRDP payment will be forwarded to landowner only after costs have been paid.)
- Protect trees established with FRDP assistance from destructive fire and grazing.
- Use the area improved for the long-term purpose of growing timber.
- Ensure that property lines are correct and clearly marked.

FRDP assistance will not be repeated for any practice except when failure is caused by natural disaster and can not be applied on any acreage already receiving federally funded assistance.

Five Easy Steps to FRDP

1. Apply and be approved for FRDP assistance at the service forester's office.
2. Submit a forest management prescription to the service forester.
3. Make necessary arrangements for accomplishing each practice approved by the service forester.
4. Make periodic inspections of each practice as it is applied.
5. Notify service forester as soon as each practice is completed.

Other Forestry Assistance is Available

Private forestry consultants and the Mississippi Forestry Commission offer a variety of forest management services to private, nonindustrial forestland owners. Also, other financial assistance programs and forestry tax incentives may be available to eligible landowners. Contact your service forester for details.



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